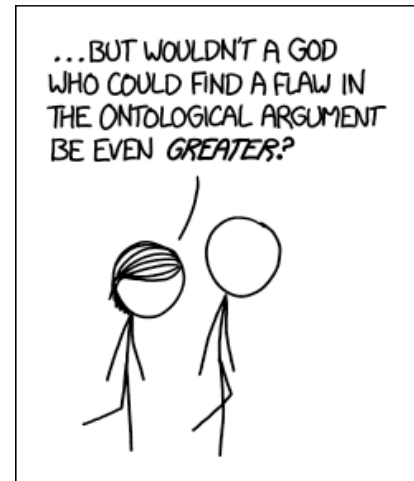


INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

DR 2066

FIRST HALF-SESSION :: 15 CREDITS



PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY—

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your *MyAberdeen* page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook.

Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

**You must familiarise yourself with this important information
at the earliest opportunity.**



COURSE TEACHING TEAM

Dr Philip G. Ziegler (*co-ordinator*)

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Office hours by appointment

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TIMETABLE

Lectures:

- ☞ Once each week on Mondays 13h00-14h00, KCF 22 King's College

Tutorials (beginning in week 2)—

There are four tutorial groups

- ☞ Mondays, 14h00-15h00, C17 Taylor Building
- ☞ Mondays, 16h00-17h00, A31 Taylor Building
- ☞ Tuesdays, 09h00-10h00, CB202, 50/52 College Bounds
- ☞ Tuesdays, 12h00-13h00, CB009, 50/51 College Bounds

Students can view their university timetable at

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>



COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Philosophy of Religion investigates fundamental and long-standing questions about the nature and rationality of religious beliefs and practices. Key topics include arguments for the existence of God, the concept and attributes of God, the nature of religious language, the problem of evil, the question of miracles, and the challenges of religious pluralism. In this course we will explore such questions through close attention to classic texts within the mainstream tradition of Philosophy of Religion. The course presumes no previous philosophical knowledge, only a keen interest in thinking patiently and critically about the subject matter. Programmatic lectures are paired with tutorial discussion of concise selections from relevant primary texts.

INTENDED AIMS & LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course aims . . .

- ✎ to introduce students to the central topics in the philosophical study of religion;
- ✎ to engage them in philosophical reflection upon these topics;
- ✎ to expand their knowledge of the key figures, texts and arguments in the field;
- ✎ to exercise and develop their capacity for philosophical reasoning, research and debate;

The intended learning outcomes for the course include:

- ✎ acquiring basic knowledge and understanding of classical and contemporary issues in the philosophy of religion;
- ✎ engaging critically and reflectively with core texts, arguments and debates in the field;



- ☞ becoming aware of different approaches to the study of the philosophy of religion;
- ☞ articulating one's own ideas and arguments clearly and systematically in written assignments and class discussion;

COURSE PROGRAMME

1/ Week One—The Question of Religion and 'Philosophizing' about it

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 1, pp. 5-22.
- ☞ NO TUTORIALS THIS WEEK

2/ Week Two—The Problem of the Plurality of Religions

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 2, pp. 23-44
- ☞ *Start of tutorials*

3/ Week Three—'God' and the Idea of Ultimate Reality

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 3, pp. 45-64

4/ Week Four—Arguing about God *Cosmologically*

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 4, pp. 65-90

5/ Week Five—Arguing about God *Teleologically*

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 5, pp. 91-110

6/ Week Six—Arguing about God *Ontologically*



- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 6, pp. 111-126

7/ Week Seven—Theodicy: the Problem of God and Evil

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 7, pp. 127-146

8/ Week Eight—Religious Faith and Reason

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 8, pp. 147-168

9/ Week Nine—What is a 'Religious' Experience Anyway?

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 9, pp. 169-188

10 / Week Ten—Religious Hope, Immortality and the Self

- ☞ Textbook—Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion*, chapter 10, pp. 189-208

11/ Week Eleven (revision week)

- ☞ *Optional session to discuss the format of the final examination*

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- ☞ Chad Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion* (London: Routledge, 2009)
- ☞ Chad Meister, editor, *The Philosophy of Religion Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007)



Copies of these books are have been ordered to be made available for purchase from Blackwells Academic Bookstore on the High Street. We will be working regularly and directly with texts from both the textbook and the *Reader* and it is strongly suggested that you purchase working copies for your own use. A limited number of copies of both volumes will be placed on Heavy Demand in the Sir Duncan Rice University Library, as well as the Divinity Library in King's College.

SECONDARY READING

☞ Please see individual chapter bibliographies in set texts for each week as well as additional bibliography on *MyAberdeen* course page |

ASSESSMENT

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

First Attempt

- ☞ A 2,500 word essay (50%)
- ☞ A two-hour final written examination (50%).

Resit

- ☞ A two-hour written examination (100%) |
- Access to the resit which is provisional on:



- All submitted coursework having been submitted and graded at CAS 6 or higher.
- Student having a valid Class Certificate. Students with C7's are not eligible for resits.

THE COURSE ESSAY

- ☞ The course essay should be **2500 words** in length, inclusive of quotations and footnotes, and should be presented in accordance with a standard academic style guide, preferably the current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Overly long, unduly short and poorly presented essays are unwelcome and will be marked down.
- ☞ A list of set questions / topics for this essay will be made available to students before the end of week 3 of the course. In all cases, the questions will invite students to engage directly with primary source materials within the context of the course and its themes.
- ☞ The Course essay is due to be submitted in the normal way on **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd, 2015**

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Submit **one paper copy** to the **drop boxes in CB008 in 50-52 College Bounds** and **one electronic copy** to **Turnitin via MyAberdeen**. Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date.

Please note: Failure to submit both an electronic copy to TurnitinUK and an identical paper copy, with the digital receipt attached, will result in a deduction of marks. Failure to submit to TurnitinUK will result in a zero mark.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

- ☞ [Click to view the University Level Descriptors \(ANNEX A\).](#)



☞ *Click to view the University Assessment Scale Band Descriptors (ANNEX B).*

☞ *Past exam papers can be viewed at*
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/>.

